

TOKEN TOPICS

of the

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of TOKEN COLLECTORS

JANUARY, 1992

Issue No. 155

Stephen P. Alpert
Editor

JANUARY MEETING

Bob and Molly Ritterband will be hosting our meeting this month, which will be on SUNDAY, JAN. 19, from 1:30 to 4:30PM. The address is 6576 Colgate Ave., in the Fairfax area of Los Angeles, not far from Marmers Market, and the Art Museum/Tar Pits. This is a return to our traditional popular January meeting place, so hopefully we'll have a good turnout for the meeting, club auction, refreshments, etc.

LAST CALL FOR 1992 DUES

If you haven't paid your \$3.00 CATC dues for 1992, be sure to do so right away to remain a member. A star after your name on the mailing envelope means your membership will expire unless you send in your dues. You can pay for several years in advance, at \$3 per year, and save, as the dues will probably be raised for 1993.

NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT

At the November meeting, hosted by John and Lillian Barnes, only four members were present: Steve Alpert, John Barnes, Dick Bestard, and Ernie Marquez. Despite the small turnout (our lowest ever?) there was active token dealings, another enjoyable discussion about southern California's gambling ships and Ernie's extensive research and book project about them, refreshments, and John showed us many interesting specimens from his collection.

To get more people to attend our meetings, we have sent a press release to TAMS Journal, encouraging TAMS members in southern California to join CATC and attend our bimonthly meetings. It will appear in the April issue.

NEW MEMBERS:

- #330 John Gentle of Salinas, CA
- #331 Denise Williams of Sonora, CA
- #332 Mark Adamson of Downey, CA

FREE ADS FROM MEMBERS (Send them to Steve Alpert, Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

IOWA TRADE TOKENS bought, sold, traded. Send large SASE for price list. Also interested in Iowa food stamp tokens, Iowa cardboard tokens, and Iowa Dun & Bradstreets. Also have a list of WV coal tokens available for SASE. Dan Anderson, Box 2752, Iowa City, IA 52244

HAVE OLD metal trade tokens Minn., Iowa, Illinois, Wis., South Dakota, \$1.00 each or write trade for good metal token. Also have plastic tokens from same states, 25¢ each. Also watch fobs sell or trade, and mechanical advertising lead pencils. Cecil F. Meeker, 1524 N. Prairie, Fairmont, MN 56031 Telephone 507-238-1324

HAVE YOUR MAIL opened first. Use old commemorative stamps. \$50.00 face value, full gum, only \$52.86 prepaid. Two lots only \$102.86. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

WANTED: Civil War ID tags; Civil War patriotics; Civil War sutlers; Connecticut or Maryland tokens. Highest prices paid or have many trades which I would prefer. To trade I have Civil War relics, misc. tokens, CW ID tags, coins, etc. Call Rich Burnham 310-320-2552

WANTED all Car Wash tokens, especially SOFSPRA. Have good traders, try me. Anyone interested in metal bicycle license tags, maybe we could swap for SOFSPRAS?? Also McDonalds and Sambos wood nickel collections for sale, check last newsletter. John G. Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr.#43, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

TOKENS ON APPROVAL: Describe your interests, I'll send a selection on approval. Pay for what you keep, return the rest! Ken Barr, P.O. Box 32541, San Jose, CA 95152

WANTED: Tokens and medals from tobacco companies (no cigar store!). Do not send. Price and describe fully in first letter. Dan Jacobson, Box 277101, Sacramento, CA 95827-7101

HUMBOLDT, DEL NORTE, Trinity, far northern California counties needed. Anybody have a Carlotta, Cal. token? How about Table Bluff, Cal. or Capetown, Cal.? Let me know what you have. Thanks. Trade or buy. Bob Giroux, P.O. Box 672, Blue Lake, CA 95525 (707) 668-5416

I WILL PAY \$20 - for Fresno tokens which I need & \$14 - for ones I already have. Daniel Manasselian, P.O. Box 8342, Fresno, CA 93747

I WILL PAY up to \$100.00 for WWI service medals issued by states, counties, cities and towns. Will also trade or swap for them. Particularly want those issued by California towns and counties. Lou Small, Box 19262, Jacksonville, FL 32245

STILL LOOKING FOR US town Centennial (Souvenir) good fors from all states. I will buy or trade. Bob Gardner, 132 E. Carmans Road, E. Farmingdale, NY 11735

WANTED: older No. California good fors, especially San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Also need Sofspra carwash tokens from Carson, Bakersfield, Encinitas, Escondido, Grover City, Lancaster, Long Beach & Oceanside. Al Kohlhardt, P.O. Box 2649, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

WILL TRADE my "40" different telephone tokens for your "40" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

DO YOU HAVE my new book yet?: "TOKENS AND MEDALS, A Guide to the Identification and Values of United States Exonumia", 300 pages, 8½x11" soft cover, 4,000 illustrations, etc. Only \$22.45 postpaid (plus \$1.45 tax in Calif., \$1.65 in L.A. County). Stephen P. Alpert, P.O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066

TOKEN TOPICS

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of TOKEN COLLECTORS

MARCH, 1992
Issue No. 156

Stephen P. Alpert,
Editor

MARCH MEETING

Our March meeting will be something new and interesting. We will be meeting at the Casino Collectibles Sale & Show in Bellflower, Calif., in the Masonic Hall, at 9813 Beach (just east of Bellflower), a block north of the 91 Freeway at the Bellflower Blvd. exit. The date is Saturday, March 21st. The CATC (The Calif. Assoc. of Token Collectors) will have a table at the show (adjacent to Steve Alpert's table; table cost to CATC is \$30). The CATC table has three purposes: 1) for CATC members to sit, trade, and talk as we do at our meetings; 2) for CATC members to share in selling casino collectibles and exonomia to the hundreds of people attending the show; 3) to publicize the CATC to local collectors and sign up new members.

The show hours are 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (dealer setup is before 9AM). CATC members can come at any time from 9AM on & stay as long or short a time as they desire. Note: There is a \$3.00 admission charge to CATC members (only the CATC officers will get in free with the cost of the table). Several CATC members will have their own tables at the show. If enough members are present, we will have our brief business meeting at 1 PM at the CATC table.

So bring along some material to trade with CATC members and/or to sell to the public at the CATC table. (No club auction this meeting.)

For future CATC meetings, beginning in May, we may have a new regular meeting place - at the Antique Guild in the old Helms Bakery building on Venice Blvd. between La Cienega and Robertson in West Los Angeles, near Culver City. They have a 525 square foot conference room that they are making available to local collector clubs, at no charge, during their regular business hours. CATC has applied for 1 to 5 PM of the third Saturday of odd-numbered months. The meeting room is adjacent to their new Showcase Gallery antique mall that has just opened in the recently remodeled Antique Guild. With this meeting location, we can again get newspaper publicity of our meeting, which brought in many collectors and people with exonomia to sell in the past.

JANUARY MEETING REPORT

Seven members attended our January meeting, at the home of Bob Ritterband: Steve Alpert, John Barnes, Charles Hendrick, Bob Kubach, Bob Ritterband, Ken Smith, and Elaine Willahan. All enjoyed an afternoon of trading and talking tokens; a small auction, and refreshments.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Early last month, longtime CATC member Fred Coops passed away. For several decades he operated a large coin store in the downtown shopping mall in San Bernardino. To many CATC members, visiting Fred at his store was the highlight of any visit to San Bernardino. He was always friendly, soft spoken, and had a smile on his face. \$\$\$ On another sad note, last month the wife of CATC member Bob Kubach died after a long illness. \$\$\$ We have four new members to welcome: Ted Krigbaum of Norman, OK, #333; David McIntosh of Cedaredge, CO, #334; Jim Seward of Mt. Holly, NJ, #335; and Ted Garber of Stockton, CA, #336. We have a real need for more local members who can attend our meetings. So all local members: see if you can convince a collector friend or acquaintance to join CATC. Dues are still only \$3.00 per year. The next issue of TAMS Journal will have an announcement for TAMS members in southern California to join CATC. \$\$\$ The Casino Collectibles show, where we will be meeting on March 21st, is issuing a set of 3 show admission casino-style chip tokens. I believe

the chips mention the Bellflower shows of March and October, 1992; they are good for the \$3.00 admission to the shows. Mintages are 100 red chips, 50 blue, and 50 white. They are available for \$3.00 each at the show, or through the mail (\$3.00 each plus SASE or postage, from Jim Munding, P.O. Box 4087, West Covina, CA 91791).

FREE ADS FROM MEMBERS (Send them to Steve Alpert, Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066; please- no requests to repeat a past ad; send new ad each time.)

WANTED - all car wash tokens, especially SOFSPRA; have traders (car wash, dog tags, bicycle license tags, parking). Still have Sambos and McDonalds wood coll. for sale to best offer. John Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr.#43, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

I WILL PAY up to \$100.00 for WWI service medals issued by states, counties, cities and towns. Will also trade or correspond. Particularly want those issued by California towns and counties. Lou Small, Box 19262, Jacksonville, FL 32245

IOWA TRADE TOKENS bought, sold, traded. Price list for large SASE, as is WV coal token list. Also interested in Iowa food stamp tokens & cardboard tokens & Dun & Bradstreets. Dan Anderson, Box 2752, Iowa City, IA 52244

WANT MERCED COUNTY tokens incl. Atwater, Dos Palos, Gustine, Hilmar, Ingomar, Le Grand, Livingston, Los Banos, Merced (Falls), Planada, Santa Nella, Snelling, Stevinson, Volta & Winton. Hoffman, P.O.Box 723, Merced, CA 95341

WILL TRADE my "15" different tokens and medals for your "15" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

YOU NEEDED some of the 16,350 tokens and medals Williges sold in 1991. Check our low-low prices. Exonumics exclusively. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

SOFSPRA CARWASH tokens wanted. Still need hundreds from all over the country. High prices paid, or will trade if possible. Thank you for all your help. Ron Perrick, 1300 S.W. Campus Dr.#13-1, Federal Way, WA 98023

TOKENS AND MEDALS wanted from tobacco companies (no cigar stores). Do not send. Price, describe fully. Dan Jacobson, Box 277101, Sacramento, CA 95827-7101

My new "TOKENS AND MEDALS" book only \$22.45 postpaid (\$23.90 in Calif.). Immediate shipment. Over 1500 sold in first 5 months. 300 pages, 4,000 illustrations, values. A must for all exonumia collectors. Full of usefull handy information. Steve Alpert, P. O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066

Saturday, March 21, 1992

9:00am-4:00 pm

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|------------------------|
| •CHIPS | •DICE | •ANTIQUE SLOT MACHINES |
| •TOKENS | •POSTCARDS | •SIGNS & ADVERTISING |
| •ASH TRAYS | •MATCH BOOKS | •NEVADA ITEMS |

**BELLFLOWER, CALIF.
MASONIC HALL**

**9813 BEACH-1 BLOCK NORTH OF THE 91 FWY
BELLFLOWER BLVD. EXIT**

\$3

**ADMISSION
AT THE
DOOR**

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of TOKEN COLLECTORS

MAY, 1992
Issue No. 157

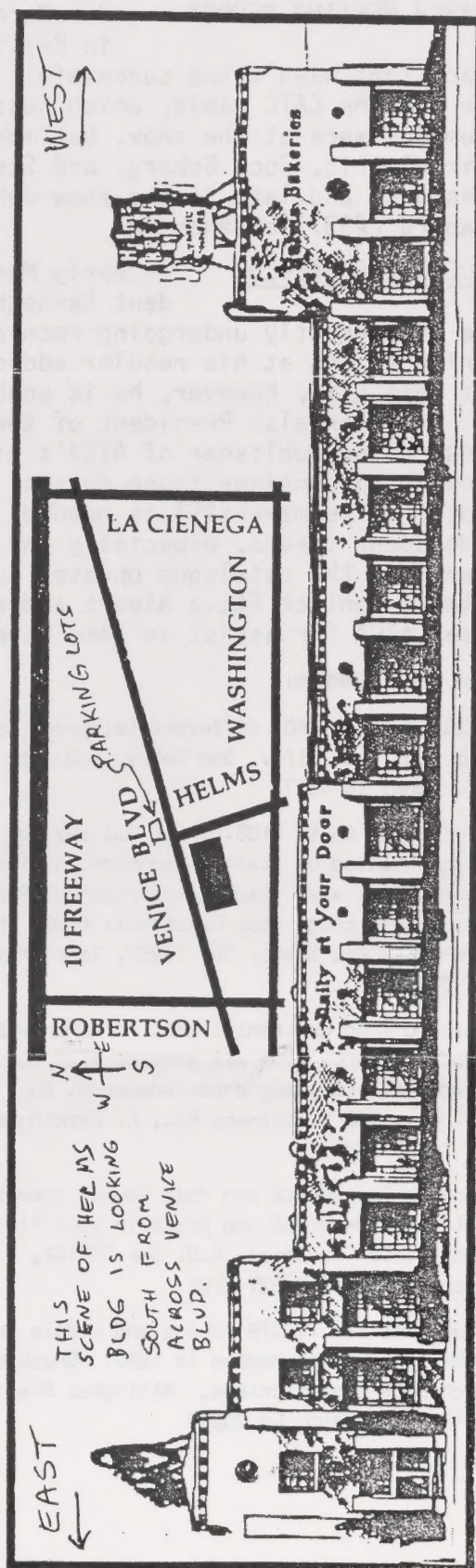
Stephen P. Alpert,
Editor

MAY MEETING Beginning this month, we will be meeting at our new location - The Antique Guild in West Los Angeles. The meeting is May 16th, 1 to 5 PM, in the conference meeting room of the Antique Guild, at 8800 Venice Blvd., in the historic old Helms Bakery building. Directions: 1) from the San Diego Freeway (405), exit at Venice Blvd. and go east on Venice about 2 miles. There is unmetered parking available on Venice Blvd. in front of the Helms building (but all the parking spaces are usually occupied on the east end of the building and on Helms Ave.); or turn left at Helms and park in the Antique Guild's parking lots at the northeast corner of Venice & Helms, diagonally opposite the Antique Guild. 2) Or from the San Diego Fwy take the Santa Monica Fwy (10) east and exit at Robertson and then take Venice east as above (very easy to get lost this route). 3) From the Santa Monica Fwy west, exit at Venice-La Cienega, take Venice Blvd. west one mile, and park in the Antique Guild's lots just before Helms Ave. NOTE: there is no traffic light at Venice & Helms - just a marked crosswalk. Be very careful crossing Venice Blvd. to get to the Antique Guild.

The Antique Guild occupies the east end of the Helms building (other stores occupy the center and west end). The meeting room is situated near the northeast corner of the building. Enter the Antique Guild on Venice near Helms. Once inside, circle around to the left: past the checkout and offices, past the cafe-coffee bar, through the antique showcases, to the conference room door on the left near the eastern wall on the building.

There is a new Showcase Gallery antique mall within the Antique Guild - dozens of tall showcases filled with all kinds of small antiques and collectibles, jewelry, etc., including some exnumia. Plus there are two acres of other antiques, furniture, jewelry, etc. to browse through inside the Antique Guild. A lot of interesting stuff to look at, in addition to enjoying our meeting in the conference room (behind the coffee bar).

I encourage all local CATC members to



THE ANTIQUE GUILD • 8800 Venice Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90034 • (310) 838-3131

attend this first meeting at our new meeting location. A press release was sent to the 54 Hours column (every Thursday in the View Section) of the Los Angeles Times. They have publicized our meetings in the past (in Torrance). If they do publish a notice of our May meeting, many people could show up with tokens and medals to sell or be identified by our members. Bring along whatever you have to trade or sell. We will have an auction only if the newspaper notice isn't published.

MARCH MEETING REPORT

Our March meeting was held at the Casino Collectibles show in Bellflower, where the CATC had a table. The change of place idea wasn't too successful, however, as no CATC members were present to man or use the CATC table, which just had some of our literature on it. Several CATC members were at the show, but most had their own table: Charles Hendrick, Walter Dirzulaitis, Jock Boberg, and Steve Alpert. Also present were Bob Kubach, Dick Bestard, and late in the show John Barnes. We picked up one new member, Cliff Gabard (#337) of Anaheim.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

In early March, CATC founding member and current Vice President Kenneth E. Smith suffered a heart attack and stroke. He is currently undergoing recovery therapy at Casa Colina in Lomita. You can write to Ken at his regular address, and his son Kirk will get the mail to him; at this time, however, he is unable to respond.

Ken is also President of the AMusement Token Collectors Association (ATCA) and editor-publisher of ATCA's bimonthly publication "The Jackpot." As he is unable to continue these duties, a volunteer to take over ATCA (temporarily and possibly permanently) is needed. The person should be a serious collector of amusement tokens, especially the modern video arcade tokens, and be willing to continue the catalogue updates published in The Jackpot by Ken since 1984. Please contact Steve Alpert and/or Ken Smith if you wish to volunteer to take over ATCA (or assist in some other capacity) and keep the organization alive.

ADS FROM MEMBERS:

Will trade my "40" different telephone tokens for your "40" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

I will pay up to \$100.00 for WWI service medals issued by states, counties, cities, and towns. Will also trade or correspond. Particularly want those from California towns and counties. Lou Small, Box 19262, Jacksonville, FL 32245

Seeking Town Centennial good fors/Municipal Trade Currency from all states. Will buy or trade. All correspondence answered. Bob Gardner, 132 E. Carmans Rd., E. Farmingdale, NY 11735-3838

Wanted: Sacramento and Yolo County tokens. Do not send. Describe and price in your first letter. Dan Jacobson, P.O. Box 277101, Sacramento, CA 95827-7101

Cash paid for 11,376 tokens and medals in 1991. Many more needed in 1992. Check our high-high buying prices. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

Still wanting all car wash tokens, especially SOFSPRA. Good traders, will swap. Transp-Parking-Dog license tags. Bicycle license tags, Peddlers Badge from East Angus Que, Canada (all Brass shield type). For sale at Catalog plus post and ins. if applicable: AK50C; CA825F, G; CA955A, B; CT35-0; NY35B, 410D; WI220P, Q, R, S; Canada Man. 900G; Que. 800L. Best offer over 3x catalog: Nev. 500A, B; Philippines 50G (thick & thin), H, I. John Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr. #43, Santa Cruz. CA 95062

RIOT SALE: This Month (MAY) only, and only to CATC members, you can buy my new "Tokens and Medals" guidebook for just \$15.00 each (which includes shipping, tax, etc.), a savings of \$7.45 or more. Book also for sale at May CATC meeting at same price. Steve Alpert, P.O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066

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JULY, 1992
Issue No. 158

Stephen P. Alpert,
Editor

JULY MEETING Join us on Saturday, July 18th, from 1 to 5 PM, for our second meeting at the Antique Guild, at 8800 Venice Blvd., in west Los Angeles, between Robertson and La Cienega Blvds. For driving directions, see the May issue. Our meeting room is behind the cafe, and next to the showcase antique mall (which was undergoing expansion at our previous meeting, so there should be much new stuff to see this time).

MAY MEETING REPORT For our first meeting at the Antique Guild, two months ago, we had a poor turnout of just five people: Steve Alpert, John Barnes, Bob Ritterband, Wally Shidler, and new member M.C. Williams. The small turnout was a bit embarrassing for us, as we had informed The Antique Guild we would probably have 10 to 15 people attending each meeting. They even offered to provide complimentary refreshments at our meetings (coffee and danish), which we declined for the time being until we can be sure of a larger attendance. We can afford to have a meeting catered, if free food is what it takes to get our local members to attend.

NEW MEMBERS We have two new members to welcome: M.C. Williams of Long Beach (who attended our last meeting and brought along some interesting tokens and medals, #337; and Louis Cambra of Torrance (a longtime token collector, who saw our notice in the June TAMS Journal), #338.

NEWS ITEMS Our Vice President and founding member Kenneth E. Smith is just about fully recovered from his heart attack and stroke of four months ago. He will be returning home before the end of this month, to resume all his token activities. He was even buying exnumia through the mail during his recovery. Ken is anxious to start work on his next two book projects: a catalog of railroad tokens and passes of the world, and a catalogue of amusement park tokens and medals. He will also resume editing and publishing "The Jackpot" of the Amusement Token Collectors Association later this year (he needs more reports of new or unlisted video arcade tokens to help fill up the next issue of The Jackpot). And he may be able to attend one of our meetings later this year. Ken's address is 328 Ave. F, Redondo Beach, CA 90277. * * * * Shell Oil has issued a series of eight "Presidential Collector Series" coins, available free (one) at Shell gas stations. The presidents are Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, TR, LBJ, Truman, Ike, JFK. The medals are large (32mm) brass pieces, but they do not mention Shell. Rare winning coins presumably state so on the coins. A card-board holder is provided free to house the coins. A set of coins can also be ordered through the mail for \$4.50, or \$29.95 for a custom set, whatever that is (maybe just in a fancy case?). * * * * CATC member Louis Small will be a featured speaker at the ANA convention in Orlando, Fla. on Thurs, Aug. 13, 3PM. He will be speaking on "World War I Interallied Victory Medals." * * * * The Angels Flight article on the next page is from the L.A. Times, and came out about a week after our May meeting, where coincidentally Wally Shidler spoke about the delays in the return of Angels Flight. * * * * The Elephant Orchards of Redlands, Calif. illustration (see next page) isn't of a token - but rather is a sticker put on every orange from there, probably early this century.

FREE ADS FROM MEMBERS: (send yours to Steve Alpert, Box 66331, L.A., CA 90066)

Will trade my "20" DIFFERENT pieces of play money for your "20" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

Wanted: ORANGE, San Diego, Imperial County, California tokens. All metal, wood or plastic tokens collected. Cliff Gabard, 1241 N. East St.#39, Anaheim, CA 92805

WILL CONTINUE to pay up to \$100.00 for WWI Service medals issued by states, counties, cities and towns. Will also trade or correspond. Particularly want those from California counties and towns. Lou Small, Box 19262 CTT, Jacksonville, FL 32245

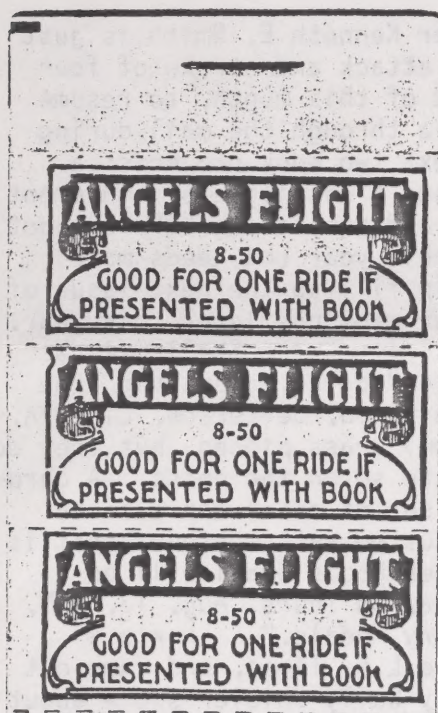
10th ANNUAL ATCO National Token & Medal Show, Holiday Inn, I-80 & 72nd, Omaha, Nebr. 9am Sat. & Sun. Sept. 5th & 6th, table information 402-571-5421.

John Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr.#43, Santa Cruz, CA 95062, writes that his ad in the May issue is still current. [Note: We do not repeat the exact same ad issue after issue; we require a new ad each issue - can be similar or reworded. Long-running paid ads are OK - 10¢ per word per issue.]

WANTED: SOFSPRA carwash and Santa Clara County tokens. Will buy or trade. Let me know what you have and what you collect. Al Kohlhardt, P.O. Box 2649, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 (408) 732-5507

You needed some of the 16,350 tokens and medals Williges sold in 1991. Exonumics exclusively. Check our low-low prices. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

Learn all the secrets of United States "Tokens and Medals." My new guidebook covers it all. 300 large pages, 4000 illustrations, values. Only \$15.00 to CATC members during July only; regularly \$22.45. Stephen P. Alpert, P.O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066 (310) 478-7405



Part of the ticket book that Zoila Rickard's been waiting 23 years to use.

Long wait for a short railway: "I'm getting impatient!" writes Zoila Conan Rickard of West L.A., who wants to use her book of Angels Flight tickets.

She's been waiting 23 years for a ride. The 315-long, not-so-rapid transit system was dismantled in 1969 by the Community Redevelopment Agency, ending a 68-year huff and puff on the side of Bunker Hill. The trusty black-and-white wooden cars, the Sinai and Olivet, were packed away to make room for the make-over of Bunker Hill. The CRA promised to reactivate the line in two years. Then five years. Then . . . the most recent estimate is late 1993.

Rickard, an actress who recalled boarding Angels Flight to get to a 1926 rehearsal date for a vaudeville act, says: "It's terrible that it was taken away. It was fun—like going to Disneyland."

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SEPTEMBER, 1992

Issue No. 159

Stephen P. Alpert,
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SEPTEMBER MEETING: We will meet on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 19th, 1 to 5 PM, at our new regular meeting place: The Antique Guild, 8800 Venice Blvd. in West Los Angeles, between Robertson and La Cienega Blvds. It's in the old Helms Bakery Building, and parking is available on the street and also in their parking lot diagonally across Venice Blvd. Our meeting room is behind the cafe, next to the antique mall showcases. The showcases are nearly all rented now, so there's lots of collectibles and antiques for you to browse through. I shopped there 2 weeks ago and actually found some things to buy: a stack of old profit sharing coupons with a nice overprint from a store in Connecticut; and a satirical Truman \$5 bill from Van Nuys, Calif.

Bring along any material you have for trading or selling or showing at our informal meeting. Once our attendance increases, we can resume our regular auctions and have refreshments. Several new token collectors in southern California have been invited to our September meeting; we hope they attend and also join our club.

JULY MEETING REPORT: Our July meeting was attended by 6 members: Steve Alpert, John Barnes, Dick Bestard, Bob Ritterband, Wally Shidler, and M.C. Williams; plus guests Nancy and Jerry Gerarden (collectors of hobo nickels); plus a brief visit from a dog that wandered in (who may have been interested in dog tags). There was the usual swapping activity and informal discussions of various topics related to tokens and medals. The Board voted to raise our annual dues to \$4.00 beginning in 1993. Don't send your dues in now - wait for the announcement in the next issue (Nov.). The \$1 dues increase doesn't affect those of you who already paid your 1993 dues in advance.

NEWS ITEMS: Los Angeles is considering re-introducing bus tokens in the near future - or maybe electronic fare cards instead. See the accompanying article from the Aug. 29th L.A. Times (submitted by Wally Shidler). Bob Ritterband adds that the idea of magnetic fare cards was first publically introduced at the 1966 AVA convention (which he organized); a speaker from Litton Industries presented the first experimental results. § § § § The Aug. 28th L.A. Times had a story on the current cash and money shortages in Russia, and how local governments are printing their own local emergency currency. The specimens illustrated with the article, 500 and 1000 ruble notes from the town of Nizhny Novgorod, are reminiscent of the German paper notgeld of post-WWI.

FREE ADS FROM MEMBERS (Send yours to Steve Alpert, Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

Wanted Calif., Arizona, Nevada or other states calendar plates. I have a large number of Calif. plates available for trade. Also wanted sterling souvenir spoons. Daniel Manasselian, P.O. Box 8342, Fresno, CA 93747

"Still wanting all Car wash tokens, especially "SOFSPRA", many good traders available (other car wash, transp, tokens, parking, dog tags, etc). Many Australian Dog License tags for sale, \$3.00 with straps, 50¢ without, many diff. available, Plus Post and or Ins. John Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr. #43, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Fabulous California token collection offered. During the last 2 years I have offered an average of 200 lots of these tokens on my price lists. Write for free price lists. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

Wanted: Sacramento and Yolo County tokens. Do not send. Describe and price in your first letter. Dan Jacobson, P.O. Box 277101, Sacramento, CA 95827-7101

Have Calif. Lottery pins for sale. Any other collectors out there? Will trade for Sofspira carwash tokens. Al Kohlhardt, P.O. Box 2649, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Will trade my "20" different good-fors, for your "20" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

Reminder - I pay up to \$100.00 for WWI Service medals issued by states, counties, cities and towns. Particularly those from California. Lou Small, Box 19262CTT, Jacksonville, FL 32245

My Mail Bid Sale # 41 closes Oct. 26. If you're not on my mailing list (if you are you'll receive the 44-page catalogue before Oct. 1) send \$1.50 for a copy. Sale has 2270 lots. Steve Alpert, P.O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066

Fare Cards' Versatility May Put Transit Tokens Onto a Sidetrack

By MARK A. STEIN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The Southern California Rapid Transit District never got a chance to save the Red Cars. The last line in Los Angeles' once-extensive streetcar network was closed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority in 1963, a year before the MTA was transformed into the RTD.

Now, however, the Rapid Transit District has a chance to save another part of Americana—the transit token.

The RTD is considering a staff proposal to replace its paper discount-fare tickets with new metal tokens—an idea that not only could save the district hundreds of thousands of dollars a year but also could help save tokens themselves.

Right now, the RTD board is puzzling over what to do about the 1.1 million Henry Huntington commemorative tokens sitting unused in an RTD vault. There are not enough of the slugs to meet the district's projected needs, and staff has recommended a different style for the new tokens to discourage counterfeiting.

If authorized by the board, the new RTD tokens could be circulating as soon as November—the month that New York City is prepared to start phasing out its ocean of tokens in favor of electronic fare cards.

Until Los Angeles renewed its interest in tokens, many people feared that the New York City Transit Authority's action could be the beginning of the end of the familiar metal slugs. New York, which orders slugs in batches of 60 million, is by far the nation's largest token user.

However, some skeptics believe that even the RTD, which is thinking about buying 5 million tokens for a limited discount-fare program, may not be able to do more than delay the token's demise.

"Is the subway token dead?" asked Norman Diamond, a consultant with Nextek in Northbrook, Ill., and chairman of the American Public Transit Assn.'s standing fare-collection committee. "It's not dead. But it's dying."

For all its simplicity, durability and nostalgic charm, the humble token just can't offer a modern transit manager the flexibility and data-acquisition capability of that 8-mil polyester pretender known as the electronic fare-debit card.

Tokens are not likely to join vinyl records and Beta-format videotapes on the technological junk heap, at least not immediately. For now, transit officials agree, tokens can work in some limited applications—for small bus systems that cannot afford electronic fare equipment, or big operators, such as the RTD, that still use buses on their busiest routes.

"It's a nice, simple, proven tool," said Thomas A. Rubin, the RTD's treasurer-controller. "Tokens have been around for 100 years. If it's not broke, why fix it?"

Transit tokens don't break. Indeed, they're as tough as steel. And as cheap as dirt.

The problem is, they're about as heavy as lead. And, technological-ly, just as dense.

"Every time somebody uses a token, somebody else has to collect that token, transport that token, sort that token and count that token," said Diamond. "Pretty soon what you're talking about are tons and tons of metal."

"The token is an inflexible instrument too. For example, it becomes very difficult for an agency to charge peak and off-peak fares if it wants to. How could you charge 80 cents at peak hour and 50 cents at off-peak without asking people to carry two different tokens?"

It also is difficult to use tokens for what are called distance-based fares, which increase according to the length of a trip—an equitable alternative to the one-size-fits-all flat fare, Diamond and others said. And tokens, unlike fare cards, cannot automatically produce a torrent of data about ridership, revenue and other factors that can help managers improve service.

Fare cards are not without drawbacks. Even the cheapest cardboard version costs more than a token; polyester cards are more reliable, but even more expensive. It takes longer to validate a card than to drop a token in a fare box, which critics say results in gridlock at bus stops.

"Even though they are exploring these electronic fare media, there will always be a place for tokens," said David Kilmartin, chairman of Kilmartin Industries in Attleboro, Mass. His company owns the Roger Williams Mint, one of the three big American token makers.

"They've been using coins for a long time because they have so many advantages," he said. "They're easy to sell, easy to carry, easy to use."

But an increasing number of big-city transit agencies have been convinced that the bad news outweighs the benefits. And the shift to fare cards in New York—in some ways, the nation's most technologically backward system, as well as its biggest—significantly accelerates a trend that tokens may not be able to reverse.

"It's kind of like the demise of the typewriter," Diamond said. "There are still lots of them around, and lots of people like them. But when you are serious and you have a lot of work to do, you use a computer."

Even a token renaissance in Los Angeles may not last for long. Because as the RTD considers buying some of the most modern, die-cut tokens, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission is preparing to test electronic fare card readers on several hundred RTD buses.

Fare cards are an attractive alternative to tokens for several reasons, LACTC planners have said. Although the RTD carries about 85% of all transit riders in the county, many new transit services by different agencies are in the works, starting Oct. 26 with the inauguration of the Metrolink commuter train network.

Transferring among services could involve many different agencies—say, an Orange County bus, a regional commuter train and the Metro Red Line subway. The agency running each service would want its own fare, or at least a fair share of a combined fee.

Rather than force a rider to pay three full fares, or tote paper transfers that later would require manual division of a single fare, a fare card would let computers at each station deduct the right amount from the credits stored on the card's magnetic stripe.

The stripe also could note whether the rider was transferring from another transit system, and let the computer deduct the proper transfer fee and credit it to the correct agency.

In addition, cards can be instructed to deduct special fares for senior citizens, students, disabled riders and children, and can charge discounted fares before and after rush hours.

Cards also let agencies charge fares based on the distance traveled. In San Francisco, for example, cards are used to electronically open the turnstiles at subway station entrances and exits. The turnstiles automatically record where trips begin and end, and a computer deducts the proper fares and returns cards to the riders.

Los Angeles' Metro will not have turnstiles, relying on roving inspectors to check tickets. But platform-mounted ticket-vending machines could be designed to issue tickets that are good only between certain stations, making distance-based fares feasible.

This flexibility, and the added revenue it can generate, has helped fare cards threaten the transit token with extinction.

The nation's biggest new subways, in San Francisco and Washington, were designed and built exclusively for fare cards and have never used tokens. Other new train systems, such as those in Atlanta and Baltimore, use tokens sparingly to supplement cards.

Boston uses them for monthly passes, and Philadelphia for one of its commuter lines. Both cities are considering whether to accept fare cards in their subways, as is Chicago with its elevated trains.

Despite this, the transit token until recently seemed assured a certain stature because it was the only form of payment accepted in New York's subway system, which together with its bus network handles one-fourth of all public-transit trips in the country.

New York seemed hopelessly resistant to fare cards. Early card-readers were too delicate to handle the city's passenger volume, too expensive to replace its 3,200 mechanical turnstiles. Unionized token-sellers and -collectors were unlikely to accept being replaced by card-vending machines. Tradition-bound passengers were expected to balk. Worst of all, some stations in the creaking, 90-year-old subway are not wired for 110-volt electricity, which any electronic system requires.

But after eight years of designing and engineering, hassling and haggling, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority has settled on a system and late last year set out to discover if the "high corrosivity" magnetic stripes it selected would stand up to the rigors of its riders—and whether its riders would embrace cards the way they had taken to tokens.

Charles R. (Russ) Broushous, senior vice president of the New York City Transit Authority, said his agency installed 150 hybrid token-or-card turnstiles in some high-volume stops, such as Grand Central Station, then dispatched a platoon of "rent-a-swipers" to repeatedly enter and exit, swiping their test cards through the electronic turnstiles.

They worked.

Then they advertised for volunteers—ordinary riders from across the city and throughout the socioeconomic scale—to try using the cards in return for discounted fare. About 4,000 people in two batches signed up, and again the cards passed muster. The passengers loved them, Broushous said.

Finally, the Transit Authority issued temporary cards to 25,000 schoolchildren for what he called

"the ultimate test."

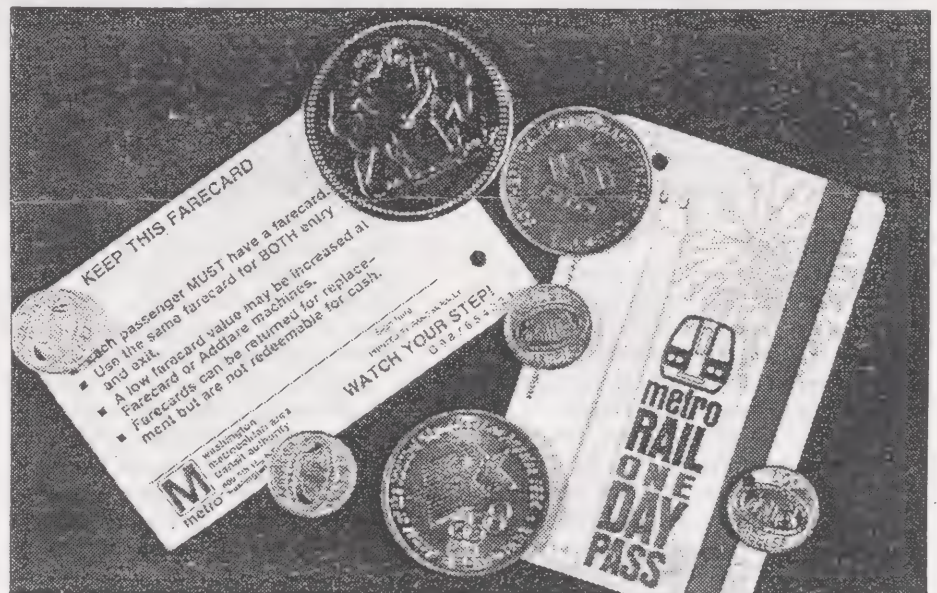
"It [the electronic fare card system] proved to be tremendously reliable," he said. "More reliable than the mechanical turnstiles, though that's not saying much. Some of the mechanical turnstiles are 50 years old."

The card system also proved as crime-resistant as it was reliable, Broushous added, because there is nothing in the turnstiles to steal—either by jimmying open the armored coin boxes or, in celebrated New York fashion, sucking tokens back up through coin slots.

Tests complete, the MTA arranged adequate funding—a staggering \$690 million, which includes the cost of rewiring stations and installing fiber-optic cables to transmit ridership, revenue and self-auditing information back to headquarters—then hired a contractor to drag it into the modern era for fare collection.

Broushous believes that the system will succeed in "conservative" New York, as it could in open-minded Los Angeles.

"We've literally traveled the world researching this, and looked at old systems like Paris and London, and newer systems like Hong Kong and Tokyo," the retired Army colonel said, "and there isn't a single place where people didn't take to cards like ducks to water."



Los Angeles Times

Metal tokens are being replaced by fare cards on many transit systems.

TOKEN TOPICS

of the

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of TOKEN COLLECTORS

NOVEMBER, 1992

Issue No. 160

Stephen P. Alpert,
Editor

DON'T MISS OUR BIG
NOVEMBER MEETING!!

Good News! One of our biggest meetings in years will take place on November 21, at the Antique Guild in West Los Angeles, near Culver City. We should have about 20, maybe even 30 members and guests in attendance, if most local members attend. Here are just a few reasons why you should be there:

- 1) Several long-time collectors (non-CATC members) have expressed interest in our club and will be attending the November meeting.
- 2) Regular local CATC members, who haven't attended a meeting in a long time, should come to meet the above collectors, as well as several new members who you haven't met yet.
- 3) To welcome back Kenny Smith, who has recovered from a heart attack, bypass surgery, and a mild stroke earlier this year. We haven't seen Ken, who is a charter member of our club, since our January meeting at Bob Ritterband's home. So come meet "The New Kenneth Smith" (as he's billing himself, "much thinner and older looking") in his return debut. He should have for sale some of the token catalogues he's authored, so you can get an auto-graphed copy.
- 4) We will have an auction! With the big turnout, it could be an exciting event, if some desirable stuff is placed in the auction. Anyone can place items in the auction. A 10% commission goes to our club treasury. John Barnes is our auctioneer; Steve Alpert will organize the lots, record bids, and collect payments. The auction will begin about 2:30 PM, followed by:
- 5) We will have free refreshments! Courtesy of our club, and our hosts, the Antique Guild.
- 6) The Antique Guild has a large Showcase mall (of smaller collectibles) plus 2 acres of larger collectibles, furniture, etc. You can look all this over before, after, or during the meeting.
- 7) You can conveniently pay your 1993 CATC dues at the meeting.

So make your plans not to miss this local exornumia event of the year! Our meetings are informal, with just a brief time out for our business meeting and auction. You can stay for as long or short a time as you wish. Bring along as much miscellaneous token-medal-and related material to trade or sell as you can; you can set up like a dealer at a show - bring albums, binders, junkboxes, etc. of material to sell, trade, or show. Also, try to bring along a collector friend or two. The more people attending, the better the meeting, and the more material to obtain for your collection. Steve Alpert will be bringing a lot of fresh material. All those attending should try to do likewise.

MEETING DATE: Saturday, November 21

MEETING TIME: 1:00 to 5:00 PM

MEETING PLACE: The Antique Guild, 8800 Venice Blvd, in West Los Angeles, between Robertson and La Cienega Blvds. The Antique Guild is located in the east end of the large historic old Helms Bakery Building. Parking is along the building on Venice Blvd., or diagonally across Venice at Helms Ave. where the Antique Guild has 2 large parking lots. Our meeting room is located behind the cafe in the Antique Guild. Upon entering the main entrance on Venice,

circle around to the left, through the showcase mall. Usually on Saturdays, a side entrance is open on Helms Ave., just south of Venice. If you use this entrance, our meeting room is immediately on the right as you enter - take one step in, one step to the right, and you're there.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS: a) from the San Diego Fwy, take Venice Blvd exit, go north a block to Venice, then go 2 miles east on Venice.

b) From the Santa Monica Fwy eastbound, exit at Robertson, stay in lane for Robertson southbound, but turn left onto Venice eastbound, and go a few blocks to the Helms Bldg.

c) From the Santa Monica Fwy westbound, exit at La Cienega (Venice), turn left onto Venice westbound, and go about 3/4 mile to parking lots.

TIME TO PAY CATC DUES FOR 1993

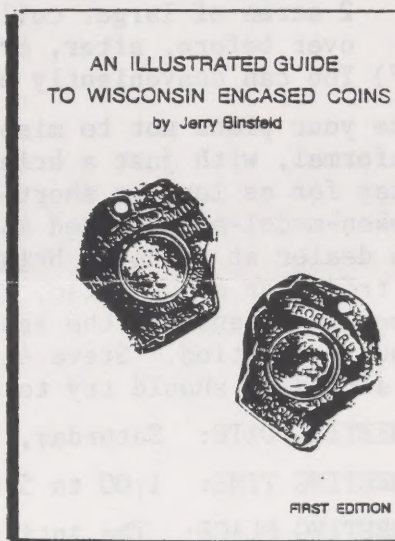
We have just raised our dues (for only the third time since 1957!) to \$4.00 per year. This includes the bimonthly Token Topics newsletter in which you can place a free ad in each issue (mail them to Steve Alpert, Box 66331, L.A., CA 90066, or hand them to Steve at the meetings). Those attending the November meeting can pay their dues in person. Others please mail your \$4.00 dues (made payable to either C.A.T.C. or Stephen P. Alpert) to Steve Alpert/C.A.T.C., P.O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066. If you have already previously paid your 1993 dues, a star appears after your name on the mailing envelope.

SEPTEMBER MEETING REPORT:

Five members attended our September meeting at the Antique Guild: Steve Alpert, Wally Shidler, M.C. Williams, Charlie Hendrick, and Matthew Jones (new member, #339, who collects movie money, both coins and currency). M.C. Williams brought a big bankroll of old foreign banknotes (please bring it again to next meeting!). Everyone present brought something to trade, sell, or show, so there was enough to keep the small group busy for a few hours.

NEWS TIDBITS:

The Southern Calif. Rapid Transit District has decided to issue new tokens in the near future. They will be ordering 5 million of the new tokens, which will be in use for at least several years; they may switch to electronic fare cards in 1995 or later. § § § § Jerry Binsfeld, P.O. Box 191, Pleasant Prairie, WI 53158 has just published "An Illustrated Guide to Wisconsin Encased Coins," 8½x11, 94 pages, listing 289 encased coins from 94 Wisc. towns (most are illustrated by enlarged photos). Price is \$10.00 post-paid. He is also planning a big book cataloging all U.S. encased coins to be published late next year. He has 3,000 listings so far (a mere drop in the bucket I believe; I'd guess at least 50,000 different exist). § § § § The article in this issue on Credit Cards is courtesy of The Credit Card Collector, a monthly magazine for collectors of credit cards and tokens. The yearly subscription rate is \$19.99; address is 150 Hohldale, Houston, TX 77022.



A DOZEN REASONS TO COLLECT CURRENT CREDIT CARDS

- Reason #1: There's no financial risk. Most modern cards are free.
- Reason #2: You can form a collection with any size of a budget. Again, the majority of modern cards are free.
- Reason #3: Little effort is required to start a collection. To get maximum results from minimal effort, read the booklet Credit Card Collecting Bonanza.
- Reason #4: There's a small collector base which allows for future growth.
- Reason #5: Credit cards are in the hands of millions of future collectors. In the United States alone, there are over 100 million people who carry credit cards.
- Reason #6: Credit cards are small and portable and are easily hidden and stored.
- Reason #7: Easy grading. All modern credit cards are issued in Mint condition.
- Reason #8: Credit cards have historical significance.
- Reason #9: Credit cards have artistic merit. Most national and international cards are designed by the top commercial artists.
- Reason #10: Mint condition modern cards are relatively scarce. There's one major distinction between this hobby and most others. It's that there's no easy way to accumulate massive amounts of Mint condition pieces. In most other hobbies, modern Mint specimens are easily available. The post office will sell as many unused stamps as people want. Grade One beer cans are available from grocery stores by cases. Mint condition baseball cards are sold by the box. But with credit cards, there's no easy way to get 50 or 100 Mint condition pieces at a time. Mint condition credit cards are one of the few mass produced items that has a true "limited edition" characteristic.
- Reason #11: Modern cards can become valuable. There aren't giant hoards of credit cards put away. When cards expire, they're generally destroyed, thus creating a true rarity.
- Reason #12: You have to apply and be accepted to get current credit cards. This helps keep the number of credit cards on the collector market low.

CREDIT PIECE HISTORY

Credit pieces date back to the 1890s when East Coast department stores issued charge coins: quarter-sized metal tokens with the customer's account number engraved on them. These charge coins were considered status symbols and women would sometimes wear them on necklaces.

Charge coins evolved into metal charge plates with raised account numbers in 1927. These plates, which look like military dog tags, were superior to charge coins because the account number no longer had to be copied by hand onto a sales slip, thereby reducing errors.

Meanwhile, paper credit cards had been in use since the early 1900s. Issued mainly by gasoline companies, they often expired every three months. Later, customers who were good credit risks received laminated paper credit cards, the forerunner of our modern plastic cards. Although they were more durable than the paper cards, they carried the same problem as charge coins: the sales clerk had to legibly and correctly copy the account number onto the sales slip. Finally in the late 1950s, the first plastic cards with raised numbers were produced.

FREE ADS FROM MEMBERS:

Does anyone have or know of WWI service medals issued by any states, counties, cities and towns? If you do, let's correspond. I'll also buy or swap. Lou Small, P.O. Box 19262CTT, Jacksonville, FL 32245

National Football Foundation Hall of Fame. First intercollegiate football game. Rutgers/Princeton. 63mm. Bronze. Medallion Arts. \$7.86 prepaid. Williges, Box 1245, Wheatland, CA 95692

Wanted all car wash tokens, especially Sofspa. Lots of good traders available, also dog license tags, Australian tags (for sale \$3 each with straps, 50¢ without plus postage and/or ins.. Also have parking tokens, transp. tokens, and Chuckie Cheese tokens available. John Nicolosi, 2565 Portola Dr.#43, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Wanted: Iowa trade tokens of all types (metal, plastic, fibre, cardboard) and Iowa food stamp change tokens and paper due notes. Send price and description. I also have the above for sale of trade. Dan Anderson, P.O. Box 2752, Iowa City, IA 52244 (Phone 319-337-6001)

Will trade my "40" different telephone tokens for your "40" diff. Sam Petry, P.O. Box 167, St. John, IN 46373

Still looking for tobacco & tobacco products tokens and medals, but not cigar store tokens. Dan Jacobson, P.O. Box 277101, Sacramento, CA 95827-7101

Dan sent this note with his ad: A "funny" thing happened at our annual WESTS [Western States Token Society] meeting in Sept. No one brought tokens to sell, so we all sat around and told stories about the old days, the old timers, etc. It was a refreshing change and we all enjoyed it.

My new book is the only general guide to the hundreds of categories and types of United States tokens and medals. Order your copy of "Tokens and Medals" now, only \$22.45 postpaid. Book has 300 pages, 4,000 illustrations, values, etc. Stephen P. Alpert, P. O. Box 66331, Los Angeles, CA 90066